

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

STATUS OF THE APPLICATION

Claims 1-60 are pending. Claims 1, 7-8, 11-15, 17-22, 31-35, 37-38, 40-43, 46-48, and 51-60 have been amended. Support for the amended claims can be found in the specification and figures. No new matter has been added.

Claims 41-60 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 101 as being directed to non-statutory subject matter.

Claims 1-5, 17-19, 21-25, 37-39, 41-45, and 57-59 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by either International Publication WO 98/13790 to Brookner et al. ("Brookner"), U.S. patent 5,822,738 to Shah et al. ("Shah"), U.S. patent 5,822,739 to Kara ("Kara"), International Publication WO 98/57303 to Gravell et al. ("Gravell"), European Patent Application EP 0927960 to Lee et al. ("Lee"), U.S. Patent 5,923,406 to Brasington et al. ("Brasington"), or U.S. Patent 5,978,781 (to "Sansone").

Claims 1-5, 17-19, 21-25, 37-39, 41-45, and 57-59 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) as being anticipated by either U.S. Patent 6,005,945 to Whitehouse ("Whitehouse") or U.S. Patent 6,141,654 to Heiden et al. ("Heiden").

Claims 1-5, 17-19, 21-25, 37-39, 41-45, and 57-59 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by either U.S. Patent Application Publication 2003/0078893 to Shah et al. ("2003/0078893") or U.S. Patent 6,594,374 to Beckstrom ("Beckstrom").

Claims 6, 26, and 46 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over either Brookner, Shah, Kara, Gravell, Lee, Brasington, Sansone, Whitehouse, Heiden, 2003/0078893, or Beckstrom.

Claims 7-16, 20, 27-36, 40, 47-56, and 60 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over either Brookner, Shah, Kara, Gravell, Lee, Brasington, Sansone, Whitehouse, Heiden, 2003/0078893, or Beckstrom further in view of In re Dulberg, 129 U.S.P.Q. 348, 249 (CCPA, 1965) or In re Harza, 124 U.S.P.Q. 378, 380 (CCPA, 1960).

PRIORITY

U.S. patent application 09/611,375 was filed on July 7, 2000 and a processing and retention fee was paid on December 1, 2000. Accordingly, the present application was copending with U.S. patent application 09/611,375 and is entitled to claim benefit therefrom as detailed in 37 CFR § 1.78(a)(1).

THE DRAWINGS

Figs. 1, 6, 7, and 8 have been amended to correct typographical errors. In response to Examiner's objections, reference labels for printers 112-1 and 112-2 in Fig. 1 have been changed to 112 to be consistent with the specification. In Fig. 6, inadvertently omitted reference label 606 has been included. Reference labels for cryptographic modules 706-1 and 706-2 in Fig. 7 have been changed to 706 to be consistent with the specification. In addition, reference labels for PSDM servers 704-1 and 704-2 have been changed to 704 to be consistent with the specification.

Fig. 8 inadvertently contained element 812 (a copy of element 806). Element 812 is not mentioned in the specification and accordingly has been deleted from the drawing. In addition, element 816 of Fig. 8 has been amended to correct a typographical error.

THE SPECIFICATION

The specification has been amended to update priority information and provide omitted patent application serial numbers. Reference labels in specification also have been made consistent with figures of the present application.

In addition, trademarks used in the specification have been further identified. Applicants respectfully submit Applicants' use of trademarks comply with MPEP 608.01(v).

THE CLAIMS

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 101

Applicants submit that claims 41-60, as now presented, comply with 35 U.S.C. § 101. Reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection is requested.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102(b), 102(e), and 103(a)

Claims 1-15

Applicants respectfully submit the Examiner has not entirely appreciated features of the present invention as claimed. Under the present invention as claimed, a single license number associated with a postage vendor system can be used to generate postage indicium for multiple end users computers. As a result, each end user computer of the claimed postage vendor system is not required to have a postal license number from a postal authority. This is substantially different from a conventional postage system where each end user system has a license number (as described in the background section of the specification). In conventional systems for electronic distribution of postage using a secure central computer, which generates postal indicia in response to postage requests submitted by end user computers, require the user to apply for and obtain a postal license number from a postal authority. (Specification: p. 5, lines 21-25). For example, claim 1 recites "... associating a single license number assigned by a postal authority with the postage vendor system; ... in response to the first request, generating information for printing a first indicium corresponding to the first stamp based upon the single license number associated with the postage vendor system; and in response to the second request, generating information for printing a second indicium corresponding to the second stamp based upon the single license number associated with the postage vendor system;"

In opposite, Whitehouse and Shah each explicitly teach that end user computers have license numbers. In fact, Whitehouse equates end user computers as licensed meters. (Whitehouse: col. 21, lines 24-25, "all licensed 'meters' (i.e., end user computers)"). The secure central computer 102 of Whitehouse stores for each meter/user account a meter/license number. (Whitehouse: col. 10, lines 46-50; col. 13, lines 37-40). Shah states that "a user who has obtained the required license from the postal service can contract with the meter company to interface the user's general purpose computer the CMRS computer via modem and telephone line." (Shah: col. 2, lines 12-16). This indicates that users in Shah have to have a license number..

Additionally, Applicants believe the remaining references cited by examiner (i.e., Brookner, Kara, Gravell, Lee, Brasington, Sansone, Heiden, 2003/0078893, and Beckstrom) also

do not teach the concept of using a single license associated with a postage vendor system to generate information for printing indicia from requests received from multiple user systems. Accordingly, these cited reference, individually and in combination, do not teach or suggest the present invention as claimed.

Therefore, independent claim 1 should be allowed for at least the above reasons. Dependent claims 2-15, which depend from claim 1, should be allowed at least for a similar rationale, as well as the additional features they recite.

Claims 16-60

Independent claims 16-21, 36-38, 40-41, 56-58, and 60 should also be allowed for at least a similar rationale as discussed above for claim 1. Dependent claims 19, 22-35, 39, 42-55, and 59, which depend from these independent claims, should also be allowed for a similar rationale, as well as the additional features they recite.

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Amdt. dated November 29, 2004
Reply to Office Action of July 27, 2004

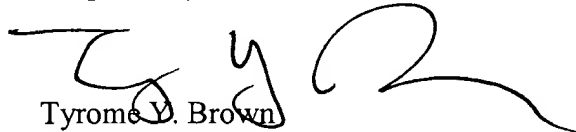
PATENT

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe all claims now pending in this Application are in condition for allowance. The issuance of a formal Notice of Allowance at an early date is respectfully requested.

If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, please telephone the undersigned at 650-326-2400.

Respectfully submitted,



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Attachments
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